



SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

In March, Seaport's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased slightly (30 jobs) from February 2004. A decrease of 460 jobs was recorded over the year since March 2003. In year-over-year comparisons, job decreases occurred in almost all industries, except *Other Manufacturing* and *Transportation* sectors. Significant decreases year-over-year were recorded in *Educational & Health Services* and *Construction*. Unfortunatley, these two sectors had been providing most of the new jobs in the 16 previous months. An analysis of these sectors shows that they are slowing down.

SPECIAL TOPIC: Population

Population in North Central Idaho between 2001 and 2003 increased only 0.5 percent, according to recently released data by the U.S. Bureau of Census. Idaho's population increased by 3.4 percent during that time. Three of the five counties in North Central Idaho (Clearwater, Idaho, and Latah), lost ground when compared to population growth in the other 39 counties of Idaho. Clearwater County lost the most population decreasing by 2.6 percent in 2003 from 2001. The region's economic engine, Nez Perce County, increased by only 1.9 percent, far below increases generated in other Idaho economic engines such as Canyon County with an 8.9 percent increase or in Kootenai County which posted an increase of 5.1 percent. By far, the North Central Idaho region as a whole has not participated in the strong population growth experienced by other regions in the state. See Seaport Table 2 for more detail.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Clearwater County

- Watco has announced that they are preparing the paperwork to abandon about 30 miles of rail line near Orofino. The line connects Konkolville with the former Jaype plywood plant near Pierce. Watco acquired Camas

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Nez Perce County, Idaho and Asotin County, Washington

	March 2004*	Feb 2004	March 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	35,460	35,500	36,300	-0.1	-2.3
Unemployment	1,240	1,200	1,300	3.3	-4.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.5	3.4	3.6		
Total Employment	34,220	34,300	35,000	-0.2	-2.2
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	35,640	35,630	36,430	0.0	-2.2
Unemployment	1,520	1,560	1,560	-2.6	-2.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.3	4.4	4.3		
Total Employment	34,120	34,070	34,870	0.1	-2.2
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	25,720	25,690	26,180	0.1	-1.8
Goods-Producing Industries	4,300	4,290	4,320	0.2	-0.5
Natural Resources & Mining	210	210	200	0.0	5.0
Construction	920	930	1,010	-1.1	-8.9
Manufacturing	3,170	3,150	3,110	0.6	1.9
Wood Product Manufacturing	560	550	590	1.8	-5.1
Food Manufacturing	60	50	90	20.0	-33.3
Paper Manufacturing	1,200	1,200	1,120	0.0	7.1
Other Manufacturing	1,350	1,350	1,310	0.0	3.1
Service-Providing Industries	21,420	21,400	21,860	0.1	-2.0
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	5,420	5,270	5,370	2.8	0.9
Wholesale Trade	590	600	630	-1.7	-6.3
Retail Trade	3,570	3,450	3,470	3.5	2.9
Utilities	90	90	80	0.0	12.5
Transportation & Warehousing	1,170	1,130	1,190	3.5	-1.7
Information	350	350	370	0.0	-5.4
Financial Activities	1,830	1,830	1,850	0.0	-1.1
Professional & Business Services	1,320	1,350	1,400	-2.2	-5.7
Education & Health Services	3,910	3,920	4,010	-0.3	-2.5
Leisure & Hospitality	2,480	2,470	2,520	0.4	-1.6
Other Services	1,040	1,060	1,090	-1.9	-4.6
Government Education	2,260	2,380	2,480	-5.0	-8.9
Government Administration	1,940	1,900	1,950	2.1	-0.5
Government Tribes	870	870	820	0.0	6.1

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

Seaport Table 2: Population Changes in Idaho & North Central Idaho 2001-2003

County/Area	Population			Percent Change		
	2001	2002	2003	2003-2001	2002-2001	2003-2001
Idaho	1,321,309	1,343,124	1,366,332	1.7	1.7	3.4
Clearwater County	8,628	8,469	8,401	-0.8	-1.8	-2.6
Idaho County	15,452	15,498	15,413	-0.5	0.3	-0.3
Latah County	35,182	35,045	35,087	0.1	-0.4	-0.3
Lewis County	3,619	3,729	3,748	0.5	3.0	3.6
Nez Perce County	36,983	37,171	37,699	1.4	0.5	1.9
Asotin (Wa.)	20,700	20,700	20,600	-0.5	0.0	-0.5

SOURCE: Population Estimates Branch, U.S. Census Bureau, April 17, 2003

Prairie RailNet in March and renamed it the Great Northwest Railroad. The railroad also travels up the Clearwater Valley to Kooskia and links the Lewiston-Clarkston area with tracks of major carriers in eastern Washington. Watco executives noted that the line from Konkolville to Jaype had not been used for more than two years following the closure of Potlatch Corp.'s Jaype plywood mill, and added that the line also is in need of considerable repair and maintenance.

- A building permit has been approved for a 34,700-square-foot, three-story Best Western Motel at 615 Main Street in Orofino. The 49-room unit, which will take approximately 11 months to construct, will be located along the Clearwater River just upstream from the mouth of Orofino Creek. The total area of the property is 2.2 acres; the motel/parking project will occupy 1.25 acres. Close to 6,000-square feet of stone will decorate the motel and grounds to match the river setting.

Idaho & Lewis Counties

- Area farmers have their fingers crossed for a good harvest. Wheat, barley, lentil, and pea farmers are aware that another drought season is predicted for southern Idaho. County extension agents said that the wheat in North Central Idaho is in good shape now and if the area gets normal amounts of rainfall this spring, there won't be much of a possibility of drought this year. The overall winter wheat acreage planted has dropped by 5.0 percent statewide, while spring wheat is expected to decrease by nearly 6.0 percent, according to Don Gerhardt, director of the Idaho Agriculture Statistics Department of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Boise. Water shortages have led southern farmers to turn to more versatile crops. Irrigation provides farmers more options such as growing barley, sugar beets, alfalfa hay, corn, beans, potatoes, and oats as part of crop rotations. In Idaho and Latah Counties, farmers are limited in their options and winter wheat is expected to remain the largest moneymaker. Southern Idaho farmers "have the risk of not getting the winter rains and we have the risk of not getting the spring rain," he said. "We all talk about the weather, but we can't do anything about it."

Latah County

- Interim University of Idaho (UI) President Gary Michael has announced a plan to balance the 2005 budget with a university-wide 6.0 percent holdback. University of Idaho department heads and college leaders have approximately five months to cut 6.0 percent from their budgets. "We project the university has an ongoing shortfall of about \$6 million that must be addressed. Many options have been on the table—none of them easy," Michael wrote in a letter to the university community. "Rather than impose an

institution-wide personnel action, we will balance the FY05 budget by requiring an additional 6.0 percent holdback of all responsibility centers, i.e. the colleges and administrative units. After sifting through faculty comments and concerns, Michael wrote that the 6.0 percent holdback appeared to be the best option. "This action accomplishes two things: It actually squeezes the expenditures out of the budget, rather than just postpones them; and it allows responsibility centers to determine how best to address their individual budget situations," Michael wrote. "This action has its disadvantages as well. The 6.0 percent comes on top of the \$2.5 million in reallocations and General and Administrative indirect cost rate increases that were already a part of the FY05 multi-year budget plan. It will impact workload, productivity and morale ...There will be layoffs; jobs may be eliminated. At the end of the day, though, fewer people will be financially impacted this way than with any across-the-board action." Over the next three or more years the university expects to eliminate an approximate \$30 million budget shortfall combined with more than \$12 million in deficits.

Nez Perce County

- In May, Potlatch Corporation became the first publicly traded timber company in the nation to win certification from the Forest Stewardship Council for managing forestland in an environmentally friendly way. Potlatch's management of its 670,000 acres of forestland in Idaho met the council's rigorous standards. Penn Siegel, chief executive officer of Potlatch, said certification helps the company prove to the public that it cares for the land. "Third party certification provides, I think, very good documentation to the public that we are doing what we say we are doing," Siegel said there is a growing market for timber products from certified forestlands, and the company hopes to benefit from that market. "But even if there were no financial benefits, it is the right thing to do," Siegel said.
- Nez Perce Tribal leaders have announced designs for a new casino. Group West, an architecture firm from Seattle, has finished final plans for a two-phase project that includes a casino and motel. The casino will feature a bingo parlor, meeting center, a sports bar, and buffet-style eatery. Smith indicated the tribe hopes to complete construction by June 2006 for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial signature event, which is expected to draw thousands of tourists. The event is part of a national project commemorating the Lewis and Clark expedition.

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